

**STATEMENT OF EDWARD J. MARKEY  
RESOURCES COMMITTEE  
DOMESTIC ENERGY SECURITY ACT  
AMENDMENT TO STRIKE TITLE VII-ARCTIC COASTAL  
PLAIN DOMESTIC ENERGY  
APRIL 13, 2005**

Mr. Chairman, my amendment strikes Title VII, the title of this bill which would reverse 40 years of national consensus in favor of protecting national wildlife refuges and launch, instead, an era of drilling for oil in these protected areas, beginning with the coastal plain of the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge.

Today's Anchorage Daily News provides a glimpse of what is in store for the Arctic Refuge if this bill ever becomes law:

“Crude oil spewed out of a ruptured Prudhoe Bay pipeline early Tuesday and "misted" up to 200 acres of tundra, a state pollution official said.

“Wind carried the oil over an area nearly a mile long and 300 feet wide, acknowledged Andrew Van Chau, a spokesman for BP Exploration (Alaska) Inc. BP runs Prudhoe Bay, the nation's largest oil field.

“BP crews plugged the leaky, six-inch pipeline and also halted oil production from wells on Prudhoe drill site 14. “

The coastal plain of the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge is the “biological heart” of the Refuge. The coastal plain is a place of abundant biodiversity: it is one of the most important polar bear denning areas in the U.S.; musk ox, grizzly bears, wolves, and more than 130 species of birds also rely on the coastal plain for their survival; each spring, the 130,000-member Porcupine Caribou Herd migrate to the coastal plain to give birth to their next

generation. The Gwich'in Indians have relied on the Porcupine Caribou for food, clothing, and medicine for more than 20,000 years. It is one of the truly special places left in the United States and on the planet.

Poll after poll has shown that a clear majority of the American people do not support letting the big oil companies into the Refuge. Neither is it universally supported by the Alaskan natives who will be most directly affected by this vote. Today, we are very fortunate to be joined by two Alaskan natives who are here because of their opposition to oil drilling in the Refuge. They are Mary Margaret Brower and Anna Davidson. I would like to express my deep appreciation to Mary Margaret and Anna for being here today as we discuss the future of their lands.

Mary Margaret is an Inupiat Eskimo from Kaktovik, the village closest to the coastal plain of the Refuge. Mary Margaret is a public health nurse and a mother. She has traveled here with a petition opposed to oil development in the coastal plain of the Arctic Refuge signed so far by 57 residents – roughly half of the voting adults of Kaktovik. I ask unanimous consent that this petition be made a part of these proceedings, as well as several articles written by them and other North Slope residents.

In March of this year, Mary Margaret wrote an article in the Arctic Sounder, saying “I am in opposition to opening of the Refuge to oil development, for the impact it has in terms of drill rigs, pipes, infrastructure and whatever else it takes to build an oil industry, taking over the Inupiaq peoples’ subsistence lands and traditional lifestyle... Once they are in, there is no stopping what the government and oil companies will do in terms of building another oil industry like Prudhoe Bay...This beautiful Arctic ecosystem that has sustained the Inupiat people is being replaced by the oil-industrialized city.”

Our second guest, Anna, is a Yupik Eskimo originally from the Yukon delta who now resides in Anchorage. Anna has said, “As a Yupik Eskimo, we are in support of Gwich’in because we live off the land just as they do. Yupiks are stepping in to support our fellow Alaskans to protect their essential food sources. Oil drilling would harm the Porcupine caribou they depend on. We are connected to them through the migratory birds that come along our coasts and are important to our culture. Oil spills in the Arctic Refuge coast could threaten them.”

In addition to the Yupiks, in February, the native village of Point Hope passed a resolution to “strongly oppose the development of oil and gas in the 1002 area of the ANWR and offshore waters of the Arctic Ocean.” These Alaskan natives are witness to what the oil industry does to their beautiful lands and traditional lifestyles, and they want the Refuge lands protected.

The decision about whether or not to preserve the Arctic Refuge is a profoundly moral one that goes to the core of our concern for future generations. This is not a discussion about a tract of land or a stand of trees. We are fighting for the right of native Alaskans to continue their traditional subsistence lifestyles. We are fighting for the right of children of future generations to see wilderness in all its awe-inspiring grandeur. We are fighting for a sane energy policy that stops shoveling out \$35,000 tax subsidies as a special incentive from Washington to choose gas-guzzling behemoths for grocery shopping. This attack on this Refuge, which is the blockbuster opening act for future attacks on all 540 Wildlife Refuges in America, is unnecessary, unsupported, and unwise.

I ask my colleagues to support this amendment, so that we can say to our children that we had the good sense to protect a few very special places in America from commercial exploitation and preserve them the way God made them in the first place.

Thank you.